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MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF CHURCH WORKERS IN UNIVERSITIES

VERNON S. PHILLIPS

The Conference of Church Workers in Universities met at the Edgewater Beach Hotel, Chicago, Ill., January 11 and 12th., 1922. One hundred and eleven delegates registered at the Conference, eighty-seven of whom were local church workers and twenty-four were board secretaries. Ten denominations were represented besides the Y. M. C. A. and the Y. W. C. A. Thirty-one institutions were represented in nineteen states. Seventy-nine of the local workers are from the Upper Mississippi Valley including three from Cornell. The other eight were from Oklahoma, Arizona, Pennsylvania and Maine. The attendance by states was as follows: Wisconsin 9, Illinois 9, Michigan 5, Missouri 4, Iowa 9, Colorado 3, Ohio 12, Indiana 9, Kansas 9, Minnesota 3, New York 3, Nebraska 4, North Dakota 1, West Virginia 1, Montana 1. Among the new faces were those of Rev. John E. Bradford, D. D., representing the Board of Education of the United Presbyterian Church; Rev. W. E. Schell, D. D. of the United Brethren in Christ; and Rev. Mr. Reynolds, D. D. of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

Rev. Jas. C. Baker of the University of Illinois reported for Commission No. 1 on "The Housing of Students at Universities." In the discussion which followed it was evident that there are several opinions as to the advisability of conducting church dormitories in university centers. Several experiments have failed. In some instances, this failure has been because of the attempt to combine a student dormitory with an administration center or a building used in part for class or social rooms. It was the general feeling that a student dormitory to be a success, must be that and nothing else. A dormitory for men presents a set of problems quite distinct from those of a dormitory for women. Some who have had experience with church dormitories for women or men felt clearly that they were a distinct success in giving the student an opportunity for home life under church supervision, in maintaining a nucleus of church leaders who live together, and in safe-guarding young people away from home for the first time. One speaker felt that the same reasons which justify the dormitory at a church college, demand church dormitories at the state universities. It was pointed out also,

that gifts are available frequently for the purchase and maintenance of dormitories which would not be available for other forms of Christian work.

The committee was continued for another year with instructions to give attention to the whole question of housing conditions in university centers, with an attempt to define the responsibility of the church and the responsibility of the university.

Among the topics considered were the following—"The Churches' Well Defined Program in Universities," reports being presented by secretaries of different denominations; "The Need of Religious Education," "A Unified Program for Religious Education," "Schools of Religion," "The Library of a University Pastor for Religious Education," "God Experience of 140 College Students," "Women in Universities," "What the Church Should Do For the Girls," "The Church Secretaries' Program," "Can there be Developed in our Universities a Minister Adequate for Present and Future Needs?"

Dr. George R. Baker reported on the question, "Should these Conferences be Continued?" His report follows:—"On the program five sub-questions are suggested—

1. What is their purpose?
2. Is it accomplished?
3. Should students be present?
4. More than one Conference annually?
5. District, Denominational, or National?

Following the discussion of the question suggested, your commission finds

1. The purpose of the Conference is
 - (a) To help men "think through" the method of their work at state universities.
 - (b) To instruct men in the work that is being done.
 - (c) To supply encouragement and inspiration.
 - (d) To supply fellowship; fellowship is friendship and a feeling of good will plus the sharing in the same services.
2. We do not believe that it is necessary to discuss the question as to whether these purposes have been accomplished. The fact that this conference has been so largely attended indi-

cates that in great measure, former meetings must have had a large element of helpfulness in them and the evident interest in these sessions proves that the men are getting what they come to get.

3. Should students be present? The value of these meetings is dependent on their character as a conference of workers whose tasks are very similar; to introduce a large group whose point of view would be that of men much less mature than those who now compose the group, would entirely change the character of the body and defeat its purpose. Further, at present there is danger that if these meetings grow in numbers, the conference character will be lost and to lose this is to lose all.

Departing now from the form announced on the program, your commission recommends that there should be an annual regional conference whose boundaries in the main should conform to those of the Y. M. C. A. districts. There should be a meeting once in three years of the Conference, which should be attended by church workers at universities from the whole United States. The time and place for the first meeting of each regional meeting should be determined by the university pastors in attendance at the Y. M. C. A. student conferences. We understand that the university pastors of the Pacific Coast are now arranging for a regional conference."

Pending action on this report, Vernon S. Phillips presented the report of the Constitution Committee. The report recommended that this conference hold its meetings in the future every three years and become a conference for the entire country and that there be created five regional conferences, an eastern, a southeastern, a central, a southwestern and a western. If this change were made, the central conference would include nearly all of the institutions represented at this conference and would probably continue its meetings in the same section of the country.

It was moved and carried that this constitution be printed and put into the hands of members and that action be postponed until next year.

It was moved and carried that the executive committee be

instructed to co-operate with church workers in various sections in arranging for regional conferences.

RESOLUTIONS

The following resolutions were adopted:

That, inasmuch as there is in our state universities an increased recognition of the Christian ideal and inasmuch as the use of the term " Christian " as applied to the church colleges is, to say the least, discourteous, we herewith call upon our respective denominational agencies and boards to adopt the use of the term " Church College " rather than " Christian College " in the literature of the churches.

That this body ask its secretary to communicate to each denomination here represented, our conviction that a very grave hindrance to securing recruits for the Christian ministry is that type of denominationalism which reduces the average church to a community group and therefore the community as a whole does not now constitute an adequate challenge to the capable young men in the state universities.

That we raise a committee to study the direct bearing of such denominationalism upon the question of recruiting and report at the next annual meeting.

The officers elected for the coming year were: President—Howard M. LeSourd of Ohio State University; Vice-President—O. W. Behrens of Michigan Agricultural College; Secretary-Treasurer—James G. Moore of Cornell University.

William Houston was continued as representative of this Conference to the Educational Conference called by the Federal Council of Churches. All arrangements as to time, place and program for the next meeting were left in the hands of the executive committee.

TREASURER'S REPORT

January 11, 1921—January 10, 1922

RECEIPTS

From Registrations at 1921 Conference..... \$60.00